

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration
Headquarters
Washington, DC 20546-0001



April 25, 2006

Reply to Attn of: **General Law Practice Group**

TO: Distribution

FROM: Alternate Designated Agency Ethics Official

SUBJECT: Determination Regarding Attendance by NASA Employees at
the 25th Anniversary of the First Shuttle Flight (STS-1)

On April 26, 2006, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) will co-sponsor an event at the National Air and Space Museum commemorating the 25th anniversary of the first space shuttle flight (STS-1). The Space Shuttle Columbia was the first manned, reusable spacecraft that was flown into orbit without benefit of previous unmanned orbital test flights. NASA will hold an awards ceremony to commend two Columbia astronauts, John W. Young (STS-1 Commander) and Robert L. Crippen (STS-1 Pilot), for their accomplishments. NASA will take the opportunity to commend the astronauts, Federal employees, industry representatives and those supporting America's space program for their accomplishments in a successful space program. The following industry representatives, who were involved with the first space shuttle, will sponsor an industry awards ceremony and a reception at the event: Alliant Techsystems (ATK), Boeing Company, Lockheed Martin, Northrup Grumman, and Pratt and Whitney.

The event will be widely attended by approximately 800 people from a wide variety of areas, including Congressmen and staffers, NASA employees, employees from other Federal agencies, industry, academia, and the science community. The estimated cost of the reception which includes food and beverages, is \$70.00 per person.

The co-sponsors intend to give each attendee an assortment of inexpensive space-related mementos. NASA employees may accept these gift items since they have been determined to be in accordance with the gift exception at 5 CFR § 2635.204(a) which provides that employees may accept gifts valued at no more than \$20 per source per occasion for themselves and their families. NASA invitees are reminded not to exceed the \$50 cap on gifts from one source in a calendar year.

I find that this event meets the requirements of a "widely attended gathering" as defined in 5 CFR § 2635.204(g). I further determine that there is an Agency interest in having NASA personnel attend the events. This event will allow NASA employees to celebrate the success of the space program and to discuss space-related matters of common interest

with a wide spectrum of representatives from Congress, other Federal Agencies, the space industry, academia and the science community. Accordingly, NASA employees whose duties do not substantially affect any of the co-sponsors may accept an invitation for free attendance at the event for themselves and their spouses or guests.

NASA employees whose duties may substantially affect the event co-sponsors, such as by way of procurement duties, should seek an individual determination pursuant to 5 CFR § 2635.204(g)(3)(i) regarding participation in this event from their local ethics counselor.


R. Andrew Falcon